

# Via paciis

*The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community*

APRIL 2016

WWW.DMCATHOLICWORKER.ORG

VOLUME 40, NO. 1

## HAMMER of Justice

Jailed peace activist prepares for trial,  
plans to put Northrop Grumman in hot seat

*By Amber Williams*

Like David standing up to Goliath, Jessica Reznicek has stood in front of tanks, made herself a human shield, and demanded peace in some of Earth's most exhausted and dangerous human environments. Her passport is a colorful collection of places that most people dare not or care not to visit in this decade or the next. The map of her travels is a rolling blueprint at her feet, and she has dug her heels into the soils and sands of war-torn lands like Guatemala, El Salvador, Chiapas Mexico, Korea, Palestine and Israel. She's seen the truth behind the TV news and borne witness to injustices impossible to describe. She carries the weight of those memories, keeping them hemmed with the sutures of her heart infinitely on the mend. Despite the symptomatic sorrow and outrage, and in defiance of all odds, Reznicek survives this life by the impenetrable armor of God.

And it's faith that sets her free, even now, as she sits in a jail in Papillion, Nebraska. The trespassing, protesting peace activist from the Des Moines Catholic

Worker, who practices civil, nonviolent disobedience as staunchly as she practices her faith, has now spent about 10 weeks in the Sarpy County Jail, serving her mission of peace by serving time. Held on a \$100,000 bond, she's an American citizen facing two felony charges. If convicted, Reznicek's roving road ends with a possible 22-year prison sentence.

### The Long "Hall of Justice"

Reznicek went to Bellevue, a south Omaha suburb, with the intention to draw attention – and she did – from the cops, the media, the public and the purveyors of war crimes who were subsequently named as her victims in a two-count felony charge.

After months of deep research into the wars she has witnessed worldwide, the Bellevue branch of the Northrop Grumman Corporation, a military weapons development company, became a fitting and conveniently located target for her plan. Armed with a bat and a sledgehammer, an outrageous act of frustration and of peace erupted from Reznicek like a pent-up volcano boiling over its brim. In a hail of shattered glass shards, Reznicek

see HAMMER pg. 10

## WHY I ACTED

*Hammer of Justice statement from the Sarpy County Jail, Papillion, Nebraska, January 11, 2016*

*By Jessica Reznicek*

Hello, everyone!

Thank you to all who are carrying me with them in heart and mind while I do this time here in Sarpy County Jail. It is felt deeply.

My spirit is strong these days, and I attribute this to the kindness surrounding me. Mostly I am grateful just simply to be alive and well, swinging my hammer of justice at Northrop Grumman/STRATCOM (United States Strategic Command).

I stand today with fierce conviction for the nonviolent direct action I have taken against the Northrop Grumman property in Bellevue, Nebraska on December 27, 2015.

I broke two windows and a door window out of the Northrop Grumman building that night in an effort to expose the details of the defense contracts currently held by Northrop Grumman with STRATCOM at Offutt Air Force Base. Over the years, billions of taxpayer dollars are pouring into the hands of these money hungry, bomb building, computer geek space war criminals.

I want to say now that I truly believe that the American people are done with war – done funding, killing and dying in U.S.-led wars and terrorism – and are ready to pave a path to peace.

Some folks, even personal friends of mine, are questioning my property

destruction tactics at Northrop Grumman as one of a nonviolent nature. I refuse to delve too deeply into this conversation, for I believe the focus should rest primarily on Northrop Grumman and STRATCOM's countless crimes against humanity. However, I will address a few small details of the events which occurred on the evening of December 27.

Yes, glass did shatter. It shattered like the illusion that Northrop Grumman holds human life in any way in its best interest. It shattered like the illusion Iraq ever possessed

see WHY on pg. 9

## Sleeping on Oil Yet Freezing to Death

*By Julie Brown*

"We're sleeping on oil yet freezing to death." That was how one Kurdish man summed up the political climate here in Kurdish Iraq. War, the drop in oil prices, corruption and mismanagement of government funds has led to a financial crisis here. As a result, government workers making up over half of the population have not been paid in six months. Many have now gone on strike.

My CPT teammate Muhammad, a schoolteacher, had worked without pay for over five months. For the past month, along with countless other schoolteachers, he has been on strike. Almost daily, instead of going to the school where he works, Muhammad stops by the CPT house and gives us the latest news.

The other evening, the phone rang and one of our friends Janeh was on the other end. She said she had to leave her dorm immediately due to the closure of her college. Professors and dorm cleaning staff went on strike and sent all the students home. Janeh lives in Syria and the news was very devastating, leaving her with many unanswered questions about her future.

Last week, several Peshmerga blocked a main road in protest of the unpaid salaries as traffic police also refused to work for several days. There have also been small impromptu protests springing up in the bazaar.

As of today, schools and universities are still completely closed. Adding to the closures, the employees running the electrical plants as well as the city water employees have said they will go on strike if their salaries are not paid.

War has devastated the region for decades, leaving numerous political parties interwoven in a difficult tapestry of agendas and alignments with other foreign governments. When I ask locals about the government the answers are very complicated. "I'm a lawyer in a jungle," said my Kurdish friend Latif.

The flow of money from Baghdad has stopped as the Kurdish Peshmerga fighters push back ISIS and gain more of the disputed historical Kurdish lands within Iraq. Yet the trickle of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from within Iraq has not halted. These new numbers only add to the deluge of refugees and IDPs that have already flowed into Kurdistan. This, along with the current financial crisis, has led to a mixture of refugees, IDPs, and Iraqi Kurds daring to brave the deadly Aegean Sea in hopes of a better life in Europe.

Every few days I hear in passing "twelve people died" or "thirty people died" or "nine people died in the sea last night." This seems to somehow be a part of life here these days. Everyone knows someone that has braved the sea. One man told me, "As Kurds, many of us have never seen the sea." For many, "the first time they see the sea they will die in

see FREEZING on pg. 11

## via pacis

c/o Des Moines Catholic Worker  
PO Box 4551  
Des Moines, IA 50305  
515-243-0765

### EDITORS

Frank Cordaro & Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs

### LAYOUT & DESIGN

Amber Williams

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

*via pacis* is published quarterly. How to subscribe: mail, email, or phone your name and address to the editor.

### PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Unless noted (or we goofed), all photos and art are produced by the Des Moines Catholic Worker community.

### THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER COMMUNITY

*The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition.*

*We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, shower, or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that advocate social justice.*

### BECOMING A DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER

We are open to new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member or visit our website: [www.dmcatholicworker.org](http://www.dmcatholicworker.org).

### MAILING ADDRESS

Des Moines Catholic Worker  
PO Box 4551  
Des Moines IA 50305

### BISHOP DINGMAN HOUSE

(Drop-in Center and Business Phone)

1310 7th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-243-0765

Live-in community members:  
Patrick Stall, Gilbert Landolt, William Petsche  
Live-in guest: Thomas Pohlmeier

### PHIL BERRIGAN HOUSE

(Autonomous and sister with the DMCW)

713 Indiana Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-282-4781

[frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com)  
Live-in community members:  
Frank Cordaro  
Live-in resident: Bob Cook

### RACHEL CORRIE HOUSE

1301 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-330-2172

Live-in community members:  
Julie Brown, Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs, Taylor Vander Well

### CHELSEA MANNING HOUSE

1317 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-777-2180

Live-in community members: Norman Searah, Ed Bloomer, Jack Petsche, Colyn Burbank, Hilary Burbank, Bryan Morrissey

### WEEKLY LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY

Mondays, 7:00 p.m.,  
Berrigan House.  
Call to confirm.

### MONTHLY VETERANS FOR PEACE MEETING

Berrigan House.  
For more information,  
contact Gil Landolt at  
[peacevet@hotmail.com](mailto:peacevet@hotmail.com)  
or call 515-333-2180.

### WEEKLY AA MEETING

Fridays, 5:00 p.m.,  
Berrigan house

### THE CHIAPAS PROJECT

Chiapas, Mexico  
Richard Flamer  
[flamerrichard@gmail.com](mailto:flamerrichard@gmail.com)



## GOT AN OLD VAN TO SPARE?

### DONATE IT FOR WORKS OF MERCY / FOOD SALVAGE

We have two “I can’t believe these old vans are still working” community vans, both too old and worn out. Yet without them, we could not do the multiple food runs that keep our works of mercy going. These vans are costing us an arm and a leg to keep running. We really need new (old) vans! Specifically, we need a cargo van to haul our grocery and produce donations around, and also a passenger van to take Catholic Workers and friends to out-of-state protests and other events.

Thank you!

**CONTACT: William Petsche**  
**PHONE: (515) 779-3215**  
**WEBSITE: [kelloogsin69@hotmail.com](mailto:kelloogsin69@hotmail.com)**

## POEMS *by Jimmie L. Lewis*

### “Three in One” – the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost

First start this with thanks  
to my real educator  
that’s God  
who put me on this Earth  
blessing my father and mother  
with a son with multitalent  
that gave me birth,  
that’s more than greater  
so let’s understand, 1-2-3 God  
is the first one, I’ll speak to you later  
God comes first, that’s my father  
and creator

I don’t ever put anyone down  
or leave them out,  
brag or boast,

or feel I’m better than the next  
or the greatest, better yet the most  
excuse me, did you hear  
what I’m saying  
or do I have to speak it slow  
excuse me once again  
I’m speaking to let you know  
God is with you all the time  
so, through you, allow God’s spirit  
to show where it all begins  
can anyone on this living Earth  
give what God gave? his only one  
to die on the cross for our sin,  
was and is his only son

and for those that still

don’t understand  
what’s being spoken about  
because I can keep going on  
I can even scream or shout  
you may think or do  
whatever you think is right for you  
you’re not God Almighty  
believe me God will show you  
the truth  
and what’s true  
and I’m not writing like I’m  
butter, bread and toast or the most  
but you better believe it’s “three in one”  
the creator, my Father, the Son, and  
the Holy Ghost.  
Amen.

## Rap vs. Poetry

Who are you to judge me ...

You’re not God Almighty  
so let’s get it straight  
you keep doing evil  
God will stop you just wait  
you can’t live your own life right  
and you say let it be  
but I’m saying “who” are you  
to judge me

First of all is God the one  
to set me free  
he sent his son Jesus Christ  
down to save me  
from evil sins, and the life of misery  
that gave me a spiritual vision  
so I can see  
that lead me into a life of  
Christ’s luxury  
so we can spread the gospel  
down from history  
God put me on this Earth  
to be myself, not to compete  
or try to be someone else  
listen to what I’m saying  
because you know that it’s true  
check yourself and see why  
God created you  
because he created everybody  
with something to do  
and the one’s that’s lost in sin  
is lost without a clue  
don’t you hear what I’m saying  
I’m not trying to put nobody down  
for those that is living in sin  
clowning around  
life is so short  
2016 is no time play games  
if you don’t know by now  
you better learn His name.







Photo by Amber Williams

Jessica Reznicek serving a Thanksgiving feast inaugurating her 12-year-old cousin to the Bishop Dingman House.

# Meal providers needed!

The Des Moines Catholic Worker relies on the generosity of the broader community to provide meals for our many guests. We are grateful to the network of church and other community groups that have shared our home over the last 40 years. But of course, circumstances change over time, and now we find ourselves with several openings in our monthly meal schedule. Please take a look at these dates and consider whether your church or other group – perhaps your friends and family – might like to participate in the works of mercy at Dingman House by becoming monthly meal providers.

## Things to Know ...

- Monthly meal openings: first Thursday, second Tuesday, third Saturday, fifth Thursday, fifth Friday, fifth Saturday and fifth Sunday.
- Saturday meals are served at noon; other meals are served at 6 p.m.
- Plan on serving about 70.

# Reflections of a new Catholic Worker

By Taylor Vander Well

Hi everyone. My name is Taylor. I'm a new DMCW community member and so, so happy to be here. I grew up in Des Moines and Pella. I went to Grand View University and got my degree in Visual Art and Art Therapy. Last year I completed a Masters in Arts and Cultural Management in Scotland. I've spent a lot of time working and volunteering for a local social service nonprofit that does arts outreach with juvenile court-involved youth and immigrant/refugee youth. I love people, creativity, and faith. I think I'll spend the rest of my life trying to find ways to combine all of those in some meaningful fashion.

When I was 16, I spent a couple weeks on a missions trip in the jungles of Panama and then I read Shane Claiborne's *The Irresistible Revolution*. Those two things rocked me from my conservative, Evangelical, small town background. From there I suppose I naively and idealistically wanted to be on the frontlines of combating social injustices. I didn't want to just send a check or donate items. I wanted to touch, taste, and see. I wanted to hear stories and know faces. I wanted to try and really understand context and culture. I wanted to be uncomfortable. I read and researched a lot. I fundraised. I spent a month in Romania working in orphanages after the country closed its international adoption policy



and the orphanages were overflowing. I went to a justice missions training school and spent three months in Morocco working with handicapped children who had no government assistance and were socially outcast. I went to Haiti a couple of times to assist with earthquake and flood relief. I joined college students building homes for deportees on the Mexican border. I spent three months interning for a grassroots organization in Uganda doing art therapy with war-affected and HIV-positive women and children.

Increasingly, I saw very little impact from short-term humanitarian work. It deeply troubled me to see how war, aid, and ignorance brought ruin to many places. Westerners have always had a his-

tory of dominance. Always the explorer, the colonizer in our blood, and it is hard to run away from when we've been so "blessed." Coming with visions and strategies, opinions and ideals, and perhaps without meaning to – imposing them. We think we know the way and how to do everything better and more efficiently than the next person. We try to help. And don't get me wrong. Many wonderful things have been accomplished and we are all called to care for one another near and far. The depleted and dependent often need a helping hand, but I think there must be a motive to empower and not overpower. Increasingly in my travels, I also saw how personalism, faith, nonviolent reconciliation, and movement toward self-sufficiency brought resilience and hope to people.

I love that the Catholic Worker embodies these things and is a long-term, sustainable movement. This is the most diverse, humble, hard working, accepting, collective community I have had the pleasure to witness and partake in. I see the community being consistent in their actions, but tailoring their interactions. What a true reflection of how Christ ministered to the individual. I hope this free, creative, unrequited love continues to lead us into solidarity with one another as we learn to empathize and empower, seeking what is best for our brothers and sisters.

## Visit the DMCW Webpage <http://dmcatholicworker.org>

**See on homepage:** DMCW Julie Brown's featured Des Moines Register article "Julie Brown finds her tribe." • Visit the Berrigan page and find links to the three email listservs that Frank and Berrigan House maintains. • Go to the Rachel Corrie page for updates on the Rachel Corrie Project. • You will also find a page for our newsletter with issues dating back to 1976 with the intention of getting a complete digital copy of all the v.p.'s as time, \$\$\$ and expertise become available. • There is a page on how to help and one on community ...

# Save the Date!

## 36th Annual Dingman Dinner

**MARCH 19** — Nobel Peace Prize nominee John Dear is the featured speaker at the 36th annual Bishop Maurice J. Dingman Peace Award dinner, the annual fundraiser for Catholic Peace Ministry. The event will be held on Saturday, March 19, at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church in Ankeny, 510 E. 1st St., starting at 6:30 p.m. The honoree for the peace award will be the Des Moines Catholic Worker. Tickets are \$40.

Email [catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com](mailto:catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com), or call CPM director Erika McCroskey at (515) 443-2074.

## Palm Sunday Procession and Service for Peace: Annual donkey-led procession, followed by a prayer service for peace

**MARCH 20** — We will raise our prayers, and strengthen our resolve to end war in Afghanistan, prevent war against Iran, seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Palestine/Israel, Syria, North Korea and other places, welcome immigrants and refugees of war and insist that "War is not the answer." John Dear, peace activist, lecturer and author, will be the featured speaker.

The procession begins at 3 p.m. in the parking lot at First Christian Church, 2500 University Ave., and ends at the Des Moines Intentional Eucharistic Community Building, 33rd Street and University Avenue, where the service will follow at 3:30 p.m. Attend either or both.

The event is organized by Des Moines Faith Committee for Peace.

## Midwest Catholic Worker Faith and Resistance Retreat: "Working on white supremacy within our movement and our selves"

**April 8-12** — The Minneapolis Catholic Worker, the hosts of this year's Midwest Catholic Worker Faith and Resistance Retreat, have invited organizers from Black Lives Matter Minneapolis to lead the gathering. The retreat will culminate in a social justice witness that will address issues and concerns of Black Lives Matter.

**For more info and to register contact Ruth Cole:** Email [ruthcookcole@gmail.com](mailto:ruthcookcole@gmail.com), or call (201) 841-7933.

## DMCW Summer Internship

**JUNE 1 - AUG. 1** — The DMCW will be hosting an eight-week immersive summer internship in our community from June 1 to Aug. 1. Residential spaces have now been filled but we encourage you to consider a non-resident internship.

Interns will:

- Participate in the daily works of mercy at the Dingman House of Hospitality;
- Join in a weekly roundtable discussion of topics important to the core of the Catholic Worker movement;
- Experience living in an intentional community with other interns and community members;
- Engage in optional weekly liturgy, Bible study, and spiritual direction for those interested;
- Take trips to other Catholic Worker communities around the Iowa area; and more!

**If you would like to participate, email us at [dmcatholicworker@gmail.com](mailto:dmcatholicworker@gmail.com). Limited space available.**

## Lordy, Lordy, Look Who's 40!

## Des Moines Catholic Worker 40th Anniversary Celebration with Roy Bourgeois, Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska and others

**AUG. 26-28** — We can hardly believe it, but somehow 40 years has passed at the Des Moines Catholic Worker and we're still here, putting our best foot forward in the effort to practice the works of mercy in service to residents of Des Moines, and to stand in solidarity with all those who resist the injustices and suffering wrought by the exploitative and destructive U.S. global military/corporate empire.

Please join us for a weekend of celebration and fellowship as we look back on 40 years of work and look forward to the next 40 and beyond. Roy Bourgeois will give a talk on Friday evening and Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska will be our celebrant for Sunday's liturgy. Expect more exciting details as things develop. We look forward to sharing this special moment in our community's life with friends far and wide!



# Legacy of Light

By Bob Cook

Dr. Martin Luther King in his famous “I Have A Dream” speech said, “In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.” Dr. King was advocating for Americans of all races to no longer be denied their social and political rights and to find their way out of the poverty in which so many live.

The Salvadoran poor would say the same about themselves. Sixty percent of Salvadorans live in poverty or extreme poverty. Many fought during the twelve-year civil war from 1980 to 1992 in their own struggle for human rights. The signing of the peace accords between the ARENA governing party and the FMLN revolutionaries in February of 1992 was a symbol of hope for the poor that they would have access to jobs, education, and medical care. Still today that is not their reality. They are as poor today as they were at the beginning of the war. Especially the young of El Salvador have chosen the “cup of bitterness and hatred” that Dr. King warned against. The life of gang “fraternities” has become the choice of many, making El Salvador, according to recent statistics, one of the most murderous countries in the world.

Dr. King’s dream for Americans was the dream of the revolutionaries who fought in El Salvador’s civil war. They too had the vision that he spoke: “I have a *dream* today! I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.” Ultimately their revolution did not achieve equality. Violence has become the creed for today’s Salvadoran youth. They have chosen to drink from the bitter cup of violence and death. Everyone laments the violence but the system continues to oppress the poor.

Salvadoran gang membership makes murder a common phenomenon in El Salvador with one of the highest murder rates in Latin America. One link to this social reality can be found in the 2010 UNICEF Report for El

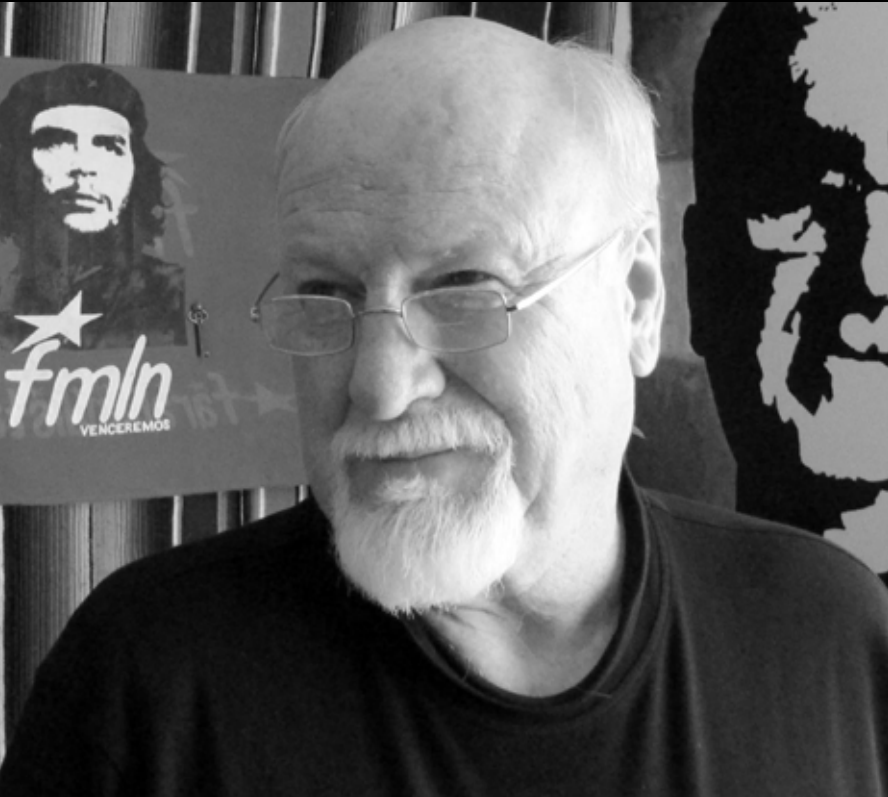
Salvador: “Almost seven out of every 10 adolescents are not enrolled in secondary education . . . School drop-out continues to be a major problem, particularly for the poorest children.”

I made a 29-day trip to El Salvador 25 years ago, in 1990, during the civil war. It was a life-changing experience. The reason for that trip is not important in the context of this presentation. What is important is that for sixteen days of my journey I lived with the poor in the dirt-floor-home community called El Tablon, on the mountainside of the pueblo of Berlin in the eastern part of that country. I experienced the stench of poverty the likes of which brings silent sobs in the night. I saw the debilitating effects of war and the hunger that follows in its wake. It broke my heart and I promised God and anyone who would sit still to listen that I would do all in my power to bring hope to the poor of that mountain-side.

In 2001 I was invited by the priest of the Parish of St. Joseph in Berlin to join the parish team developing social projects. One focus was education. The result has been the construction of three new elementary schools to replace the marginalized schools that had been built with scavenged materials during the war. Teachers were volunteers with few resources with which to work. They were schools that symbolized the hopes of parents that their children would have an education in spite of their extreme poverty.

A new school was also built in the canton El Tablon. Education has become a priority on that mountainside and it happened in part because of the help many people in Iowa brought to the pueblo of Berlin. They came in delegations from Des Moines area churches and they still come today, ten years after my retirement. And you know what? THERE ARE NO GANGS IN BERLIN.

I believe education is a factor in helping make that happen. Because it was not always true. I remember living in the parish church for a year in 1994-1995 at the invitation of the priest who served the Parish of St. Joseph of Berlin at that time, Padre Protasio. One of my first nights at the church the noise of the gang of Berlin made itself known to me right outside the window of my room. The next



day beneath that same window was painted the MS gang emblem of El Salvador. Yet today I can walk across Berlin at midnight without fear of violence, in one of the most murderous countries in the world.

The other positive development since the signing of the peace accords in 1992 has been the re-opening of schools in rural areas that had been closed by the war. Most had classes through the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, some through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It has been phenomenal that the emphasis on education has resulted in the availability of education in rural areas to 9<sup>th</sup> grade in a couple of schools. With a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education, students can attend the high school in Berlin, and then some go to college. Many have their tuition paid for by sister churches of the cantons formed by the parish team of Our Sister Parish, the same mission I worked with ten years ago.

The hard life of the Salvadoran small farmer on the mountainside requires everyone in the family to do their part to be able to exist. Young boys help their fathers in the fields to raise basic crops of corn and beans to fill hungry stomachs. Girls help their mothers to gather wood to cook the food and to bring water to the home. By the time they are finished with chores they have little daylight left for study. Besides, it is difficult to study on an empty stomach. The youth may have great desire for an education, but by the time

they get around to doing their homework it has to be done in the dim light of oil lamps or candles. These families will never have access to the electricity generated by volcanic steam just a few miles down the mountain because the cost is prohibitive. The basic need for food comes first and there is none left over for such luxury. A sense of discouragement dampens their hopes for an education. In their waning desire they often become a statistic in the Salvadoran school drop-out rate I cited from the UNICEF Annual Report of 2010. Solar electrification is at least part of the answer to encourage continued education by the youth in the countryside of Berlin, El Salvador. It is a no-brainer that they need adequate light to study by.

I refuse to be Lay Missionary for the Berlin Parish in name only. My work at the priest’s request is the installation of simple solar electrification systems in homes in the countryside. Each will provide three bulbs for light and a port to charge telephones. Electric lights will make it possible for children to be able to study at night. Even adults deserve the benefit of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology.

I leave you with this thought from Deuteronomy, 30:19: “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants.”

# Norman’s Whereabouts

By Norman Searah

Hello there. I was asked to shorten my article on the way to church; I just started to go and I said I would. It was my second time there. It reminded of a part of the movie *Brother Sun and Sister Moon*. Where the people and animals gathered together and they were poor and you got a chance to see the rich of the time at church.

I used to go to John the Baptist Church in New York City near the bus station so I didn’t have much walking to do and it was good seeing the monks there. I miss the Masses at the Catholic Worker and the people that came. I’ll never forget that I used to go to different churches when I would run away a lot. I recall the time I went to Wounded Knee when I was a little younger; it is a sacred place to the Lakota Sioux.

The Sioux, in respect and love for the people that were massacred on December 29, 1890, each year hold a memorial ride on horseback in winter weather. It’s called the Big Foot Ride. In December 1990 the ride marked its centennial with a lot of Lakota from the Lakota Nation.

To a lot of people this may not mean much, but I’m learning a lot. They are our brothers and sisters, young and old. They fight in our wars, were code talkers in our world war and they are still trying to be like us, but seeing and reading, I find that they need help.

We in Iowa need to be a united state like the Native Americans, ranchers, cowboys and a lot of others protesting and saying we don’t need the Keystone pipeline. We could do the same here in Iowa and take it

to the Statehouse and the Governor along with fracking and the Bakken pipeline. Right now people want to frack in Iowa – do you care about people getting sick from drinking water? Does water really burn? (I heard, I might be wrong).

But the Mississippi River is still flooding. It was high in Davenport some time

ago. Then I heard that in St. Louis it went over some levees. That flood water covered Interstate 44 in Valley Park, Missouri. I saw a newspaper picture of it; even houses, businesses and whatever were flooded.

And figure how sad I was for the area. If the ocean water rises, cities, towns and whatever will get flooded and maybe other

areas and maybe last a long time. And I don’t believe we need oil pipelines right now, but water pipelines that have a system that can change seawater into fresh. If we build a lot, maybe it will help all of the dried up lakes, ponds and somehow fill our aquifer and if we do it right maybe bring back our farmland and more. But the problem is I am nobody, and nobodies are hardly heard so it might get done, but anyway I saw a good movie, let me tell you about it.

It is called *This Changes Everything*; it’s a documentary that is happening now. Filmed over 211 days in nine countries on five continents over four years. It was inspired by Naomi Klein, an international non-fiction bestseller. I saw it with others at the Catholic Worker. It’s not on DVD yet but it still might be on computers and Nooks. We hooked up a computer to the television to enlarge the movie.

Another movie is *Six Degrees Could Change the World*, by National Geographic. I wonder about the two degrees that was talked about at the summit in Paris, France. I never got to learn much.

I can’t wait for middle spring to hang my wet clothes to dry and see other ways to get off the grid. I take the bus, I don’t fly, and I’m into cloth bags and I collect plastic bags for the house. I collect pop bottles and cans for an old friend and more . . . Well, thank you but I have an idea. I would like to know what’s happening in other parts of the country and maybe at the next National Gathering we can talk about climate change in our areas. What do you think and feel . . .





# The Des Moines Catholic Worker: 40 years and counting!

By Frank Cordaro

Forty years is a long time. It's the number of years the Israelites wandered in the desert. As the saying goes, it took one night to get out of Pharaoh's Egypt and it took 40 years for the Israelites to get Pharaoh's Egypt out of them. 2016 marks our 40th year as the Des Moines Catholic Worker DMCW community. And though we started the DMCW 40 years ago this August, the truth is there's still a whole lot of Pharaoh's Egypt left in us.

After 40 years of following Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker ways, I've discovered being a Catholic Worker is not the answer to our national social ills and sins of denial. Being a Catholic Worker is more like taking an antidote, something you need to do, to keep honest, with eyes wide open to the matrix of lies that drives our modern U.S. way of life. That is, practicing the works of mercy, living in community, close to poverty, sometimes going to jail or to war zones as nonviolent resisters to our nation's imperial ways is how to be a sober and decent human being in the midst of what the Catholic Worker Aims and Means calls "spiritual destitution ... manifested in isolation, madness, promiscuity and violence." In the U.S. we are up against our own version of what St. Paul called the "Powers and Principalities" (Ephesians 6:12).

One big difference in the Catholic Worker movement today compared to 1976 when we started: there are a lot more of us! The movement will always be small by design; but in our smallness, we have grown! Both in numbers and in significance.

In 1976 there were few communities that were over ten years old – no more than five, ten at the most. In the May 2013 issue of the NYC Catholic Worker newspaper, a list of over 150 communities was published. As I looked through the list of the big cities besides NYC that have had Catholic Worker communities for more than 30 years, I saw Los Angeles, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Washington DC, Baltimore, Boston, Denver, Chicago, Kansas City, San Francisco, Atlanta, Detroit, Las Vegas, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Portland, Pittsburgh, and Houston.

Listed also from middle-sized and small cities with communities of 20 years or better are Columbia MO, Rochester, Worcester, Birmingham, Austin, Hartford, Bloomington, South Bend, Waterloo IA, Dubuque IA, Orland ME, Saginaw, Duluth, Winona, Syracuse, Ithaca, Albany, Cincinnati, Akron, Oklahoma City, Yankton SD, Nashville, Norfolk, Tacoma, Alderson WV, Oxford WI, and La Crosse.

And when we started in 1976 there was only one rural community that had over ten years of existence, and that was Tivoli, New York. Today I find nine different rural and farming communities from on the list that are over 20 years old: Sheep Ranch, Calif.; Malo, Iowa, Winchendon, Mass.; Marlboro, N.Y.; Silk City, N.C.; Louisa, Va.; Spencer, W. Va.; Waukesha, Wis.; and Luck, Wis.

Equally significant is the increasing number of lifelong Catholic Workers, folks who have logged in more than 20 years in the movement and are planning to retire in Catholic Worker communities! When we started in 1976, I could not name 20 people who had been in the movement for over 15 years, let alone lived their lives and retired in Catholic Worker communities. Today there are at least 200 people who have logged in more than 15 years, and many of us baby boomers are planning to retire in our communities!

Still, by any numerical measure on a national scale, the Catholic Worker movement remains very small. Yet, over the last



Bishop Dinmagan and guests at Berrigan House celebrating Mass in 1978

40 years, we have both grown in numbers of people and communities who are building onto a living, growing, changing, 83-year, U.S. Catholic, lay-based, independent, decentralized movement and tradition.

Now, we must add the Pope Francis factor! On September 25th of last year, the day after Pope Francis talked to the U.S. Congress, I posted on our national Catholic Worker Google group: "HOLY COW!!! What a day!!! The Italian American Jesuit Pope named Francis held up Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton to the US Congress as American Catholics to follow!!!! Can't make this up!!!!!"

Pope Francis mentioned only four Americans in his speech to the Congress. The first two were President Lincoln and Martin Luther King. Both men martyred in our national nightmare and legacy of slavery and racism. President Lincoln fought a civil war that cost more American lives than both WWI and WWII. Martin Luther King lost his life leading a nonviolent

movement trying to make our national claim of freedom and equality true for black and poor people. And people lost their lives, got arrested and were sent to jail in King's civil rights movement.

Then the Pope named two American Catholics, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton, as Americans to follow also. It's a good bet that most Americans, Catholics included, do not know much, if anything, about who Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton were. But for a baby boomer Catholic Worker like me, hearing the Pope mention Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton was like winning the Roman Catholic lottery! Two American Catholics, both of them converts: Day in the 1930s and Merton in the 1940s. Both of them nonviolent pacifists at a time in the Catholic Church when there were no pacifists. Both of them very critical of U.S. capitalism and post-WWII U.S. global designs. Both of them mentors and friends to the anti-Vietnam War Catholic left that led to national protests and draft board raids and helped end the war. Both of them friends of Dan and Phil Berrigan. HOLY COW indeed!

about who Dorothy Day was and how "Catholic" her Catholic Worker movement really is.

In Des Moines, the Catholic Worker's planned 40th anniversary celebration this August looks to be a major flash point between competing versions of Dorothy and her movement.

On the one hand, Des Moines Bishop Pates and his Presbyteral Council represented what a lot of his fellow U.S. bishops and conservative Catholics believe about Dorothy's saintly

see FORTY on pg. 8

**Still learning how to be sober and decent human beings in the midst of "spiritual destitution ... manifested in isolation, madness, promiscuity and violence."**

## From Jeju Island...

Martha Hennessy and Toni Flynn spent the month of December and celebrated Christmas with the "Save Jeju Now – No War Base on the Island of Peace" campaign on Jeju Island, South Korea. Martha is Dorothy Day's granddaughter and a member of the New York City Catholic Worker Community. Toni is a long time California Catholic Worker, SOA activist and author. Three more Catholic Workers have since joined them on Jeju.

Crissy Kirchhoefer, of the St. Louis and Columbia Missouri Catholic Workers, Melissa Yager from the Tacoma Washington Catholic Worker, and Brenna

Cussen, a Dubuque Catholic Worker, flew to Jeju Island February 19, 2016 for a four-week visit to join the daily Mass, Rosary and "100 Bows Prayer" that take place at the main entrance of the newly built South Korean/U.S. Navy base.

We welcome these Catholic Worker delegations to Jeju Island. The Save Jeju Now campaign is a unique combination of the local Catholic Church and its bishop working side by side with local and national South Korean peace activists in a direct action campaign. We urge more Catholic Workers to visit and witness in solidarity with this unique Catholic peace campaign.

**For more info and updates contact Frank Cordaro:**  
Email [frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com) • Phone (515) 282-4781

movement trying to make our national claim of freedom and equality true for black and poor people. And people lost their lives, got arrested and were sent to jail in King's civil rights movement.

Then the Pope named two American Catholics, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton, as Americans to follow also. It's a good bet that most Americans, Catholics included, do not know much, if anything, about who Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton were. But for a baby boomer Catholic Worker like me, hearing the Pope mention Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton was like winning the Roman Catholic lottery! Two American Catholics, both of them converts: Day in the 1930s and Merton in the 1940s. Both of them nonviolent pacifists at a time in the Catholic Church when there were no pacifists. Both of them very critical of U.S. capitalism and post-WWII U.S. global designs. Both of them mentors and friends to the anti-Vietnam War Catholic left that led to national protests and draft board raids and helped end the war. Both of them friends of Dan and Phil Berrigan. HOLY COW indeed!



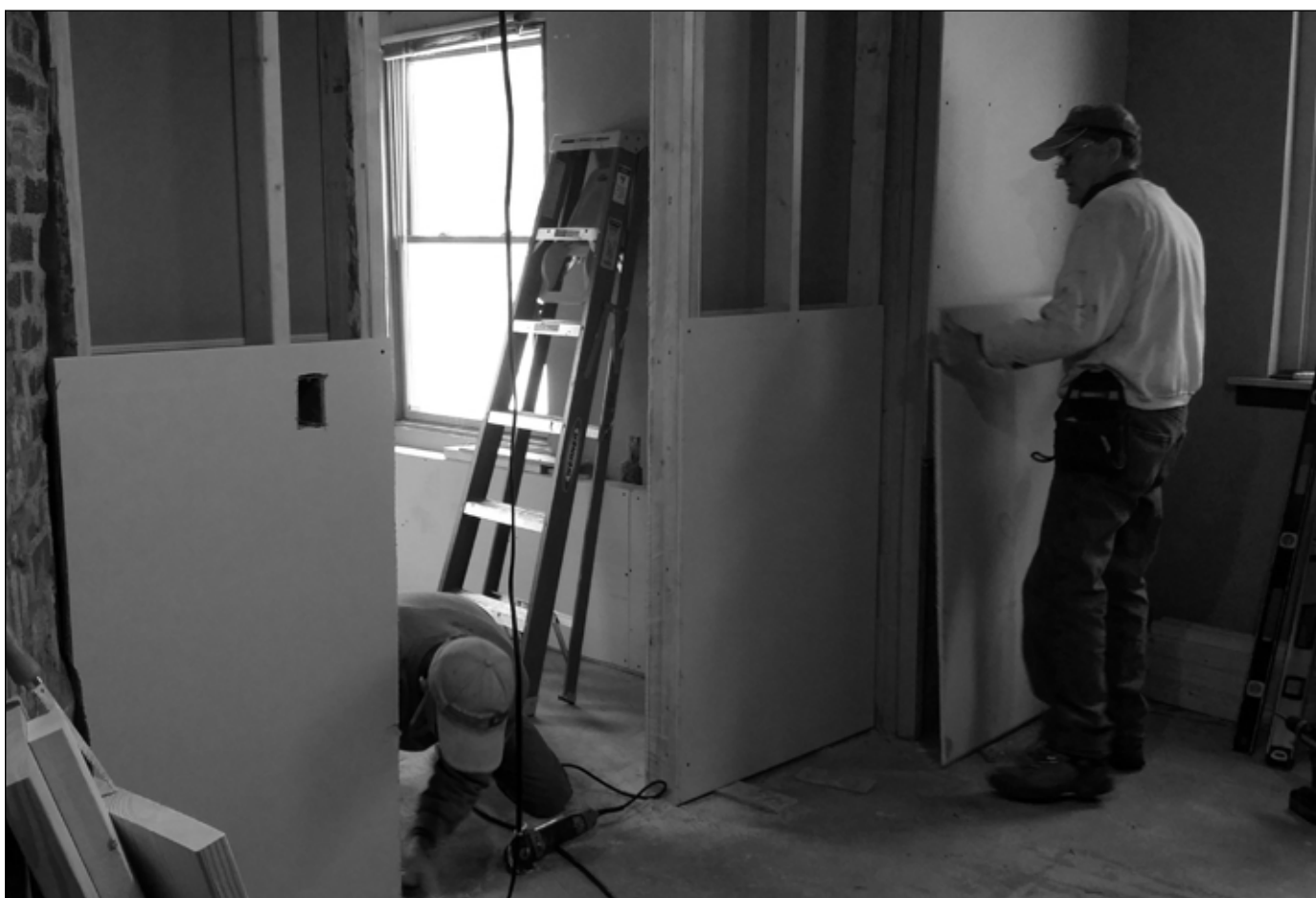
Melissa Yager, Brenna Cussen, and Crissy Kirchhoefer with Father Mun Jeong-Hyeon at Jeju Island Navy Base



Feast of Holy Innocents, Dec. 28th vigil at STRATCOM, Offutt Air Force Base. (L to R) Greg Boertje-Obed, Gail Johnson, Ed Bloomer, Cassandra Dixon, Fr. Jim.



Jack Petsche with birthday cake featuring Cornel West and Jack Petsche.



Dick Mullen and Chuck Kunkle refinishing the Manning House Basement to create new living quarters.



Emily and Brady Dorman and Don Brown from Our Lady of Immaculate Heart providing entertainment at Dingman House on Christmas Day.



Colyn Burbank, Hilary Burbank, Taylor Vander Well and Bryan Morrissey on New Year's Eve





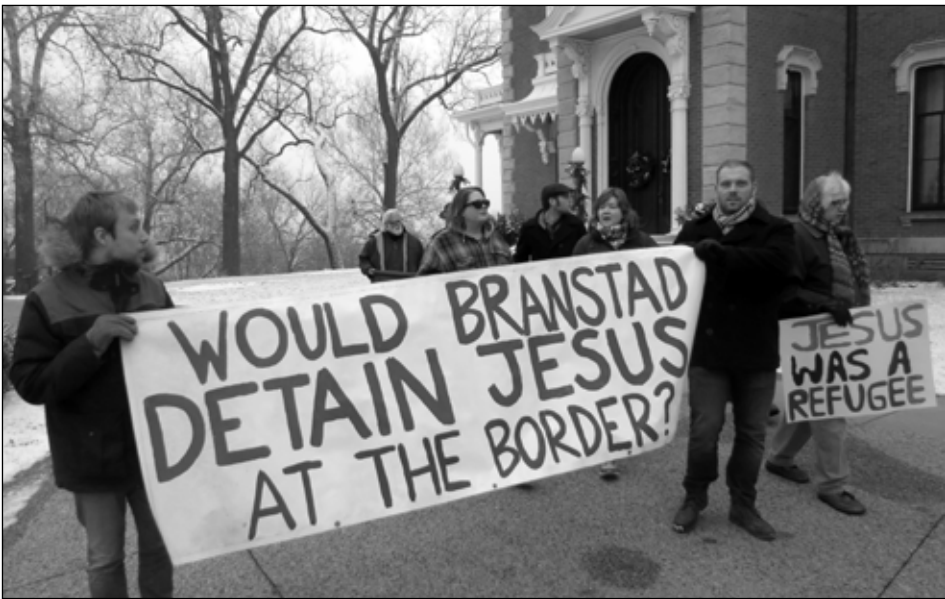
Des Moines Catholic Workers and friends at going away party for Julie Brown at Berrigan House, December 30, 2015.



The Ithica Catholic Worker grandmother who got 6 months for protesting drones. Feel free to write: Mary Anne Grady Flores #12001966, Onondaga County Department of Correction, PO Box 143, Jamesville, NY 13078



Dozens of refugees who fled ISIS are now living in temporary mobile containers at a monastery in Iraqi Kurdistan. This family is enjoying the first warmth of spring in the courtyard. *Photo by Julie Brown.*



Des Moines Catholic Workers and friends vigiled and sang carols on Christmas Morning outside the Governor's Mansion in Des Moines.



Jack and William Petsche often practice their juggling skills at our Saturday morning produce giveaway at Trinity United Methodist Church.

FORTY, continued from pg. 5

# Getting happier every day

qualities when he wrote, “The Bishop of Des Moines and the Presbyterian Council have enormous appreciation for the legacy of Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, and the philosophy she espoused. They are also aware that while her radically faithful witness to the Gospel was highly challenging to her fellow Catholics, especially in the Social Justice arena, she was equally faithful to the liturgical traditions of the Church and followed them” in his May 10, 2015 letter to the Des Moines Catholic Worker informing us that we no longer had the privilege to celebrate a Catholic Mass at our Catholic Worker.

On the other hand, there are those, like myself, Catholic Workers who have lived the “Catholic Worker Way” who believe that it was Dorothy and her Catholic Worker’s open and public anti-capitalist positions, her life of service to the poor, and the Catholic Worker’s uncompromising commitment to non-violence, actively resisting all U.S.-led wars and acts of war since the end of WWII, that make Dorothy saintly for the American Catholic Church.

Brenden Walsh, from Viva House in Baltimore, says it well about these bishops and the conservative Catholics’ point of view: “It’s like focusing on Hall of Fame baseball player Hank Aaron’s bunting record. Sure Hank Aaron had a bunting record. Every ball player does, but he’s in the Hall of Fame for hitting over 700 home runs!”

Sure, Dorothy Day went to Mass and prayed the Rosary daily. So did my great-aunts and millions of other Catholic women in the 1930s, 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s. Dorothy Day is up for sainthood for her “radical faithful witness to the Gospel” as a Catholic, not because “she was equally faithful to the liturgical traditions” of the 1930s, 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s U.S. Catholic Church.

The majority of Catholic Work-

ers I know, who have invested 20, 30, and 40 years of their lives, living and working in the Catholic Worker communities listed in the cities and towns above, also support women’s ordination in the

## If you’re not...

Catholic Church. Which is no great shakes, for we know that more than 60% all U.S. Catholics support the ordination of women.

Like most people my age, changing my mind on women’s issues has been a process. When we started the Catholic Worker in Des Moines in 1976, I was not sure about the wisdom of women’s ordination and I firmly believed the Catholic Worker movement was not suited to deal with such internal Church issues. I held on to this position mostly because of Dorothy and the NYC *Catholic Worker* newspaper that forced a kind of unofficial “quietism” about Church dogmas having to do with sex and gender. As long as Dorothy Day was alive, the Catholic Worker movement’s positions on these issues were kept out of the NYC *Catholic Worker* paper and off the table as suitable causes to embrace.

Dorothy died in 1980. That was 36 years ago. We don’t live in the same Church, country or world. Dorothy converted into the Catholic Church of the 1930s. Her Catholic practice in worship, devotions and piety were all formed in a 1930s Church. For most of Dorothy’s Catholic Worker life she attended Mass and prayed the Rosary daily. She made yearly retreats with Father Hugo, and made sure all the Catholic Workers knew about them and urged Catholic Workers nationally to attend. She carried this 1930s practice of Catholicism throughout the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s. When I met Dorothy Day, in the summer

of 1975 (in the early post-Vatican II years), she was a real critic of the new liturgies and the permissive sexual and drug culture that seemed to be taking over us baby boomers. She was right about the sex and the drugs.

I also know that in 1976 I did not become a Catholic Worker and follower of Dorothy Day because of how she practiced her Catholicism. I was already a Catholic. I became a Catholic Worker because of the works of mercy, the communal life, and the movement’s commitment to nonviolence and resistance to war. The Catholic Worker offered me a way to stay Catholic and follow a radical faithful witness to the Gospel.

## If

I’d like to recommend a must-read book for Catholic Workers, “Christ Actually” by Catholic author James Carroll. In the closing chapter he writes about Dorothy Day, the Dorothy Day he knew in the 1960s and 70s. His description of Dorothy Day fits the Dorothy Day I met and knew back in the 1970s when we were just beginning. Some might say Carroll did not give a very flattering description of the elder Dorothy. However it is one that rings true to the Dorothy Day I knew. Carroll uses Dorothy as an example of an American Catholic who was an “actual” disciple of Jesus.

I just want to reaffirm our community’s support for women’s ordination and open communion in the Catholic Church. Of the two, open communion would be the most radical for the U.S. Church. Many mainline Protestant denominations ordain women in the U.S., and thank God they do! It needs to be done in the Catholic Church too. However, in the U.S., practicing open communion would change the Church far more.

Frankly, there is something very

unseemly about Christians claiming their Eucharist is better than others. It goes against the very spirit of the Eucharist which welcomes the sinner who’s ready for love. No more than love and no less that love is demanded at every Eucharist! If this spirit of unconditional love is not allowed to happen, by design it’s dead. This is true regardless of whose Church its in, how the table is set, who gets to preside, who gets to preach, what rite is used, bread or wafer, wine or grape juice, apostolic succession or not.

Put simply in Catholic terms, if the priest is also the bouncer, the Church’s enforcer of class action denials of who can receive communion, then the unconditional love that is at the heart of the sacramental life is fractured from the table to the people.

The first thing people need to know about an open communion policy is that the Catholic Church

would not have to change one teaching or dogma. An open communion policy is a pastoral thing, something

that can be done without changing any teachings or dogmas. Pope Francis seems to have opened the door to such ideas when he challenged the Church to be a more listening and merciful Church.

Why not stop judging others’ efforts at doing Eucharist? We all do it so badly in this country, who are we U.S. Catholics to judge? Why not welcome all efforts at trying to be the body of Christ in our world? God knows the world needs Christ’s body. It doesn’t have to be Catholic, does it? The Catholic Church and the Bishops would lose nothing in doing this, except enriching our Eucharist, freeing the priest, welcoming the sinner and becoming more representative of Jesus

in the world. By taking away our institutional filters and letting the full power of God’s unconditional love and unlimited forgiveness work from the table out, how can this be wrong?

All are welcome to join us in Des Moines the last weekend of August for our 40th anniversary celebration. We are planning on having Father Roy Bourgeois as our keynote speaker Friday night and will end the weekend with Sunday morning Mass with Reverend Janice Sevre-Duszynska. More details to follow.

It’s not only the Des Moines Catholic Worker’s 40th year, but February 16 marks my 65th birthday. And in my life, I personally couldn’t feel any fuller of purpose and meaning. The Des Moines Catholic Worker finds itself in trouble with both the Church and the State this year. We must be doing something right; Jesus had the same problem. Our community is alive and well, younger people are coming around thanks to Patrick, Bryan, Hilary, Colyn and Jack. Two women from our community are our “active duty” peacemakers. Julie Brown is in Iraqi Kurdistan with Christian Peacemaker Teams and my partner, “Hammer of Justice” peace activist Jessica Reznicek, sits in jail awaiting trial.

Halfway through my 60s and it’s been my personal best decade. My newest favorite song, “If You’re Not” by Ani DiFranco, says it all: “If you’re not getting happier as you get older, then you’re fuckin’ up ... If you’re not aware that what you put out is what you get back, that you make the world through

## getting happier...

the way you act, you better ready yourself, cause whatcha gonna do if you’re not?”

## Iowa speaking tour with Kathy Kelly and Ann Wright

Retired Army Reserve Colonel and Veterans for Peace activist Ann Wright and Voices for Creative Non-violence cofounder Kathy Kelly will be touring Iowa this May. They will be in Des Moines on Friday, May 6, speaking at Trinity United Methodist Church. The event is sponsored by Des Moines Veterans for Peace and the Des Moines Catholic Worker. The tour has been organized by the three Iowa chapters of Veterans for Peace.

Please make every effort you can to join us. These are two great peacemakers who have much to say about the U.S.-led worldwide drone wars.

“When Jess heard that Kathy and Anne were coming to Iowa to speak about U.S. drone warfare she was excited!” Frank Cordaro said.

Over the phone, Jess shared with Frank that Northrop Grumman’s Aerospace Systems sector made close to a billion dollars profit for the company in 2014.

**The two most popular and profitable programs were the Global Hawk drone at \$136 million profit and the Fire Scout drone, which earned \$111 million dollars.**

### May 1-7

### PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

Sunday, May 1: Kalona  
Monday, May 2: Dubuque  
Tuesday, May 3: Open  
Wednesday, May 4: Mt. Mercy College, Cedar Rapids  
Thursday, May 5: University of Iowa Center for Human Rights, Iowa City  
Friday, May 6: Trinity United Methodist Church, Des Moines  
Saturday May 7: Open





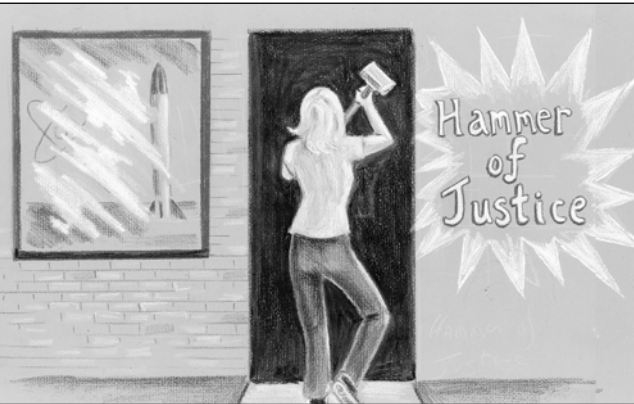
WHY, continued from pg. 1

# A radical act of peace

weapons of mass destruction. It shattered like the illusion Iraqis were involved in 9/11. It shattered like the lie that perpetual war will ever bring peace. Glass shattered in the name of the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi lives taken when Northrop Grumman/STRATCOM's direct bombs from space rained down upon them. I destroyed two windows and a door, yes! STRATCOM with its corporate partner Northrop Grumman destroys life in the tens of thousands.

I did not swing my hammer blindly. Actually, quite the opposite. I swung only at windows whose blinds were pulled up, to ensure I would injure no one. Nor did I break either of the windows or door threatening a human being.

When the police arrived, my arresting officer (who I ended up adoring and would love to grab a beer with when this is all said and done) found me kneeling in the main entrance of the Northrop Grumman build-



Help Jess defend herself & put Northrop Grumman on trial May 24 for war crimes!

Mail info on Northrop Grumman & its victims to help Jess make her case directly to her in jail:

Jessica Reznicek  
Sarpy County Jail  
1208 Golden Gate Dr.  
Papillion, NE 68046

ing, with my empty hands raised above my head. He first asked me to lift my coat slowly to make sure I had no bombs strapped to me. I was eager to cooperate. I was not feeling threatened by him and I wanted to return the favor. I wanted to convey to him that I had love and respect for him as a fellow human being.

Admittedly, however, I did shrug a little, considering the irony that Northrop Grumman has just recently been awarded a \$55 billion contract to build a new long

range U.S. bomber ... and I am the one being checked for bombs.

That all being said, I suppose that what I am trying to say is I acted in accordance with my conscience and my spirit, and that my property destruction was a useful form of nonviolent direct action. I do not stand in judgment of folks who feel uncomfortable using such methods. Nonetheless, I want to stand beside them, asking them to develop and apply their own means to expose the

lies of Northrop Grumman and STRATCOM, be it through education, research, writing letters, public discussions, public vigils, rallies and marches and yes, even civil disobedience.

Blood is pouring through the streets of many nations in the Middle East. People are dying all over the globe, masses of human beings are being dislocated, and the environment is under attack; all this through our U.S.-led global warmaking ways. There isn't a continent on the planet free of a U.S. military presence; there are U.S. military bases in over a hundred countries. People all over the planet are resisting the U.S. global military presence in hundreds of places.

I just returned from Jeju Island, where Catholics and South Korean peace activists are resisting a South Korean/U.S. Navy base being built there.

We all have our part to play. Here in the heartland of America we who seek peace must make efforts to dismantle the U.S. military dominance of space from the top down, by publicly and nonviolently resisting the joint Northrop Grumman and STRATCOM missions.

This is why I acted. You do not have to act as radically or dramatically as I did, but please make a statement in your own way against government funded companies which focus on war and destruction.

Peace.

## Upcoming court dates for Jess:

Monday, May 16 • Pretrial  
Tuesday, May 24 • Trial

For more info and updates contact Frank Cordaro:

Email [frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com) • Phone (515) 282-4781

## Why Northrop Grumman?

# The profiteers of war gain wealth from death

For decades, Northrop Grumman has been manufacturing weapons and weapon systems for profit for the U.S. government. Most public requests for contract details are not fulfilled, despite the fact that the United States Department of Defense accounts for 85 percent of Northrop Grumman's revenues each year.

Meanwhile, Jessica Reznicek was charged with criminal mischief – a felony due to the damages exceeding \$5,000 – for breaking out windows in one of the corporation's branch offices. Held on a \$100,000 bond, the peace activist from Dallas County, Iowa, plans to put the weapons development company named as her victim in the defendant's chair at her trial this May. Below is a list of facts from Reznicek's research. Help her build her case by sending her more information!

### The business of war, paid for by YOU!!

- Northrop Grumman spends \$10 to \$20 million each year lobbying Congress, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. In return, it is one of the very top recipients of federal contracts year after year.
- In October 2015, Northrop Grumman received a \$55 billion contract from the U.S. Air Force to build 21 long-range strike bombers, which are capable of being launched for an airstrike from the conti-

nental U.S. to anywhere in the world, according to the Secretary of the Air Force.

- Shares in Northrop jumped 5 percent the day after the Air Force's announcement. The company said \$4.3 billion was left on its current stock buyback authorization as of the year's end, while shares in Northrop rose 30 percent in 2015 and have climbed 342 percent between 2010 and 2015.
- *Defense News* ranked Northrop as the world's sixth-largest defense contractor in the publication's 2015 list of the globe's top 100 weapons makers and switched positions with General Dynamics (NYSE: GD) from the 2014 ranking.
- *USA Today* included Northrop Grumman in its list of the 10 companies profiting the most from war.
- The corporation recently reported it generated \$2.6 billion in income and earned a profit of 12.9 percent.
- Northrop Grumman CEO Wesley Bush makes more than \$21 million a year, and board members, several of whom have government careers, including Congressmen and a General who was appointed by President Bush to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and an Admiral who was Chief of Naval Operations.

Sources of this research include *Forbes.com*, *Govconexec.com* and *Northrop Grumman itself*.

## Forbes Magazine #144

**Wesley G. Bush** is the CEO and president of Northrop Grumman. The 55-year-old executive serves on the board of directors of Conservation International and the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation, and he chairs the boards of the Aerospace Industries Association and the Business-Higher Education Forum.

### Wes Bush's annual compensation

SALARY	\$1,470,000
BONUS	\$4,030,000
OTHER	\$5,020,000
STOCKS	\$1,190,000

**TOTAL \$11,700,000**



Wesley G. Bush

# Women's ordination and open communion at the DMCW

As *via pacis* readers know, the Des Moines Catholic Worker was censured by the Catholic Diocese of Des Moines following a Mass held at the Worker in December 2015 with Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska, a woman priest. It is the position of the Roman Catholic Church that women may not serve as priests, and that the Mass we held was not a true Roman Catholic Mass. Also at issue is the fact that we extended an open invitation to all to join in the sacrament of the Eucharist. This is forbidden by the Roman Catholic Church. Church tradition stipulates that only Catholics may receive the Eucharist. In response, Bishop Pates, with

the unanimous support of the Presbytery Council, ruled that Roman Catholic Mass may no longer be held at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. Representatives of the Des Moines Catholic Worker met with Bishop Pates and the Council in November 2015 to discuss the issue, and we reported on that meeting in the December issue of *via pacis*.

As of this writing, we have had no further communication with the Bishop or the Council about these issues, although at the conclusion of our meeting in November, all expressed openness to continuing the dialogue. The Des Moines Catholic Worker remains committed to this dialogue, and we

are hopeful that the Bishop and the Council will be able to meet with us in the near future. We continue to believe that God does not discriminate on the basis of gender, and that persons of all genders may be authentically called to service in the priesthood. We also feel that the sacrament of the Eucharist should be open to all who seek reconciliation and love, regardless of personal religious affiliation. We believe that Jesus would not have it otherwise.

In this spirit, we have invited Rev. Janice Sevre-Duszynska to celebrate Mass with us during our 40th anniversary events this summer. Also in attendance will be Father

Roy Bourgeois, who was excommunicated in 2008 after he delivered the homily at Rev. Sevre-Duszynska's ordination ceremony. It is our hope that, although we disagree with the Church on these issues, the Bishop and the Presbytery council will not condemn our community – or those who stand with us – for acting in accordance with conscience. We feel that when the Church acts punitively towards those who disagree with its doctrines and advocate for change, the Church is harmed. We hope that the Council will reconsider its decision and lift the ban on Mass at the Des Moines Catholic Worker.

**HAMMER,  
continued  
from pg. 1**

# The Hammer in the

# HALL OF JUSTICE

muscled her way into the Northrop Grumman building at 3200 Samson Way uninvited and unwelcome with the intention only to “shatter the lies” with a Hammer of Justice and to get herself arrested.

“I broke two windows and a door window out of the Northrop Grumman building that night in an effort to expose the details of the defense contracts currently held by Northrop Grumman with STRATCOM (Strategic Air Command) at Offutt Air Force Base,” Reznicek wrote from jail in a January 11 letter she mailed to media titled “Why I Acted.” “Over the years, billions of taxpayer dollars are pouring into the hands of these money-hungry, bomb building, computer geek space war criminals.”

The property damage was estimated to cost Northrop Grumman more than \$5,000, according to bid documents, which bumps Reznicek’s criminal mischief charge up to a felony classification per Nebraska law. She was also charged with felony burglary due to the unauthorized entry and intent to commit a felony offense.

A month after her arrest, Reznicek finally had her initial day in court. In a Sarpy County building cutely euphemized “The Hall of Justice,” she stood in her own defense at a January 26 preliminary hearing. She told Judge Stefanie Martinez that her requests for law books, library time and even her criminal case file and case number have all gone ignored by Sarpy County Jail administrators. Still, she planned to proceed as attorney pro se as best she could.

“In my experience, lawyers rarely place value on the principles I hold close, which is why I stand before you today without legal representation,” Reznicek told the judge as she stood all of five feet plus an inch or two in a paunchy striped jumper and chains at the defendant’s table.

Seemingly sympathetic, the judge made the incorrect inference that Reznicek desired a reconsideration of her hefty \$100,000 bond amount, mistaking Reznicek for every other inmate appearing in faded stripes and iron cuffs gracing the day’s Magistrate Court roster.

“I understand that in your mind that may be what you think I’m asking, but I refuse to pay any money to a system – no offense – that I don’t believe in. So I am not requesting a bond review, because I would never pay any money to this court,” Reznicek admitted. “Your courtroom concepts don’t resonate with me. I’m rarely certain as to what you want me to do or say or why the prosecutor – a stranger – is paid to discredit me, my character, my conscience and my truth.”

No doubt, Reznicek’s presentation displayed an unprecedented honesty to which this Hall of Justice has rarely (if ever) seen and which Martinez had probably seldom met in her years on the bench. Though she seemed to appreciate that conviction, any glimmer of generosity from the judge vaporized in the shadow of hypocrisy and courtroom politics after Reznicek surprised the District Attorney with another unusual announcement: “I understand I have the right to waive my preliminary hearing, but I don’t want to do that. I

want to go ahead and have a preliminary hearing,” Reznicek insisted.

A disheveled prosecutor seemed caught off guard by the defendant’s motion to proceed. But she was quick on the rebound, motioning for a continuance of one week citing the absence of her primary witness, Bellevue Police Officer Allison Evans, who she said had suffered an injury in the line of duty recently, rendering the witness unable to make it to court.

“I don’t know who my arresting officer was for sure,

but it was a man, not a woman,” Reznicek objected. Deputy DA Laurie Burgess explained that it’s typical protocol for a police department to delegate a supervisor – or, in this case, his training officer – to testify on behalf of the arresting officer. But that didn’t fit either. Reznicek recalled her arresting officer mentioning his upcoming retirement, which suggests he was a veteran with the department, and which also suggests, as a retiree, he would be more available and appropriate to satisfy a subpoena from the DA’s office and offer ideal witness testimony.

Any semblance of sympathy from the bench dissipated along with any hope that this courtroom was indeed operating in a “Hall of Justice,” as the sign outside claimed. Martinez sustained Burgess’ motion to postpone the preliminary hearing despite Reznicek’s objections.

“But, do you understand that I have to go back to jail now? And one week is a very, very long time in my world,” Reznicek tried, but in vain. Martinez affirmed Reznicek’s request to have her case file sent to her cell and to be granted access to law books and library study, but her right to due process was tabled.

After her week to regroup, Burgess arrived more prepared to the February 1 public hearing. With the right cop in attendance this time, recently retired Bellevue Police Officer Mike Pilmaier was called to the stand. Pilmaier testified to the

details of Reznicek’s December 27 arrest, stating under oath that the suspect was not threatening or violent during her alleged crime and subsequent arrest.

The case was bound over to District Court, with an arraignment slated for February 8. Reznicek’s motion for a signature bond was denied by both Martinez and District Court Judge Max Kelch at the arraignment. Both deferred the decision to the judge at the next court tier.

As of press time, the trial judge had not yet been assigned, but a pretrial conference date was set for May 16 with the trial to follow on May 24. Kelch did, however, grant Reznicek indigent status to assist with defense costs. Meanwhile, Des Moines Catholic Worker Frank Cordaro wrote to the Nebraska Jail and Prison Ombudsman requesting help in assuring Reznicek is afforded her legal rights to defend herself while incarcerated.

“Every day she is without adequate legal material depreciates the defense she hopes to present in court,” Cordaro wrote. Hammer of Justice or not, Reznicek remains an inmate of Sarpy County Jail at the mercy of the state judicial system. From her cell, she maps out her defense, which wholly focuses on applying accountability to the profiteers of war rather than her own salvation.

## People For Peace

Few people realize how much of American taxpayers’ money is used for violence, oppression and murder under the guise of standard military operations and national security, nor are public funders privy to exactly how those billions of dollars are spent each year.

Catalogs of notes, documents, interviews and statistical data are collected among Reznicek’s few worldly possessions. It was only the beginning of her arduous research, which had recently earned her \$2,000 in grant funding from the oldest state-level peace advocacy group in the nation, Nebraskans For Peace (NFP). But she didn’t get a chance to cash the check before Reznicek’s spinning compass pointed toward a more radical act of peace than what even the NFP can officially condone. Shortly after Reznicek’s action, NFP president Ron Todd-Meyer published a public statement expressing support for Reznicek’s point of view but distancing the organization from her choice of tactics, which he felt was contrary to the organization’s policy of nonviolence.

Others do not see Reznicek’s outrageous maneuver as violent at all – aggressive and radical, indeed – but such adjectives are not synonymous with violence. Cordaro, who is a veteran activist for peace with decades of experience protesting at Offutt Air Force Base just down the road from Northrop Grumman, compares her crime to Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple and to the Catonsville 9 Catholic protesters who burned military draft files in 1968. He and two others were arrested as potential suspects along with Reznicek on December 27. All three were acquitted on January 26.

The real offenders need to be put in their place – the defendants’ chair. In a true Hall of Justice, war tycoons like Northrop Grumman CEOs, shareholders and profiteers would stand in the shackles and chains and stripes and shame. If a peace activist from Des Moines is suspect for damaging property, then are not the makers of war also suspect? Corrupt government agents who frivolously and irresponsibly spend public monies on compromised corporations like Northrop Grumman without answering to the people who pay for it – while in fact lying to them – in the guise of “security” are suspect. And perhaps we all are suspect – except for activists on the cell block like Jessica Reznicek. Doing nothing doesn’t always imply innocence. As long as American tax payers continue to unknowingly or apathetically fund, without question, the evil deeds of a greedy, ruthless few who perpetuate the carnage of war for personal profit and play God over Earth and space, each of us are all oiling the gears on the war machine.

And until they are taken to task, the United States Constitution and liberty as it was meant to be are as much of a ruse as the courthouse in Papillion, Nebraska dubbed a “Hall of Justice.” In a world where war crimes are touted as national security and the criminals are called heroes, where action is confused for violence and activists are made out to be terrorists, there is no justice. And if justice is not in America, where in the world is it?

In all her travels, Reznicek’s search for justice has brought her to a jail cell in Nebraska, to a courtroom under its flag before a judge who operates under oath to uphold it, and so far, the only citizen in this global equation who seems to be



Standing outside the Sarpy County “Hall of Justice,” Frank Cordaro, Mauro Heck and Michele Obed showed their support at Jess Reznicek’s initial court appearance.

remaining true to this proud American principle is the one on trial.

“Although I understand it is your job to judge me, I’ve already decided to try not to judge you,” Reznicek told said in court in closing statement. “I vow instead to remain true to my spirit and true to my faith, because I believe that this will set me free.”



Reznicek’s arresting officer Mike Pilmaier retired shortly after her arrest after 25 years of service with the Bellevue Police Department.



Amber Williams is a freelance writer based in Iowa and the cousin of Jessica Reznicek.



# I hope we hammer out peace and justice worldwide

By Michele Naar-Obed

As the word of Jessica Reznicek's action is getting around, I thought I might add a bit more substance to the story.

I've known Jess for a little while now. I know she's lived in Central America. She's lived with Occupy Des Moines, and now with the Des Moines Catholic Worker. She's seen poverty and despair. She's seen the suffering of people in small nations as they deal with oppressive and deadly interactions from the empire building nations. Now, in researching the weapons systems contracted out from the Pentagon to private developers like Northrop Grumman and used in places like Offut Airforce base and STRATCOM, she put all of this together and a spark ignited in her spirit to cry out loud and clear: ENOUGH.

Intending to take full responsibility for her action on the night of Dec. 27, 2015, on the Feast of the



Photo courtesy of KETV  
Jessica Reznicek's three co-defendants bailed out of jail after the bond hearing a couple days following their arrest for driving her to Northrop Grumman. All three had their charges dismissed at the preliminary hearing a month later.

Holy Innocents, Jess took hammer and baseball bat with the intention of entering the Northrop Grumman office building in Bellevue, Nebraska to dismantle and disarm the computer systems that hold the contracts and plans for a variety of illegal and immoral weapons systems. She fully intended to adhere

to the principles of nonviolence in that she was committed to making sure no person was injured, harmed or felt threatened by her action. She intended to hammer out a message that lethal danger to humanity exists on those computers and it needs to be stopped. She intends to give up her freedom by

remaining in jail so that the rest of us might continue ringing the bell of freedom from the captivity of fear mongering generated by the weapons developers and researchers. She intends to sing out the song of love between our brothers and our sisters from behind the jail cell wall and hopes that our song of love will join with hers and amplify this message.

I had the privilege of driving Jess to the site where this action would be carried out. I knew very little of the plan but I felt I knew enough of Jess's heart to, at the very least, help with transportation to the site. I had no intention of doing anything but that. The act itself was Jess's. That's what she made clear to all of us that she wanted.

The act, however, leads us to a bigger challenge, which is to ignite the spark and get the fire of passion burning in all people of good will to say ENOUGH to death and destruction, ENOUGH to fear and hatred, ENOUGH to war and

killing. ENOUGH, ENOUGH, ENOUGH.

I know people have raised questions about the tactics used in this action. Some might see the use of the baseball bat and hammer as tools of destruction by smashing the windows. Maybe another way to look at it is the windows are now open to allow us to see the horror of the plans developed in that building. Her intention to dismantle and disarm the computer systems might also be viewed as a means to clearing out the communication system of death and opening up a space to communicate love and hope.

I, for one, thank Jess for the challenge and the opportunity. As time goes on, I'm sure we will hear more from Jess directly. Until then, I hope we can hammer out justice, ring the bell of freedom and sing the song of love between our brothers and our sisters all over this world.

FREEZING, continued from pg. 1

## Still the sun was shining...

it." Sadly, this is the reality here. The situation is so dire for many that they dare to risk crossing the deadly waters with their families and children because they see no other op-tion. NATO announced yesterday it will send warships to the sea. It is clear that many people are at a breaking point to where they will leave all they have ever known behind in hopes for adequate food, shelter and a better quality of life. It is also quite clear that they need financial and humanitarian solutions, not warships in the Aegean Sea.

With all this happening, still the sun was shining as I woke this morning. The local baker was baking fresh bread on the corner and construction workers were smearing a final coat of cement on the facade of a new building being erected next door. Outside, cars buzzed by as taxis picked up passengers heading to the bazaar and points beyond. I was glad to see that we had electricity. Still, I knew that it meant people were working yet another day without pay and that last night while I slept, people were huddled in overcrowded rafts somewhere in the Aegean sea.

Des Moines Catholic Worker Julie Brown is a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraqi Kurdistan. She is on her first three-month tour of duty as part of a three-year commitment with CPT. She can receive email at [stormsage1@yahoo.com](mailto:stormsage1@yahoo.com) and is also reachable on facebook.



Des Moines Catholic Worker  
*via pacis*  
PO Box 4551  
Des Moines, IA 50305

*Change Service Requested*

PRESRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEWTON, IA  
PERMIT NO.  
371

# via pacis

*The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker community*

APRIL 2016

WWW.DMCATHOLICWORKER.ORG

VOLUME 40, NO. 1

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Prayers . . . without them, nothing happens.

### VOLUNTEERS:

Monthly meal providers, individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance . . . without them, we burn out.

### FOOD:

Milk, Salted Butter, Sugar, Coffee, Creamer, Salt, Black Pepper, Salad Dressing, Leftovers from weddings, funerals and other social gatherings . . .

### HEALTH AND HYGIENE:

Feminine Hygiene Items, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Multivitamins, Antibiotic Ointment, Band-Aids, Lip Balm, Hand Warmers.

### TOILETRIES:

Disposable Razors, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion, Deodorant, Soap, Toothpaste. (Small sizes preferred for handout . . .) Toothbrushes and Toilet Paper.

### NEEDED CLOTHING:

Underwear, Socks, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies, Coats, Work Pants, Shoes and Boots. (All Sizes – especially big . . .) Sleeping Bags, Blankets.

### HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES:

Candles, Bleach, Laundry Detergent, Dish Soap, Murphy's Oil Soap, Pinesol, Trash Bags, Brooms, Rugs, Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs, Aluminum Foil,

Plastic Wrap, Sandwich and Freezer Bags, Bath Towels, Bowls.

### HOUSE REPAIRS:

With four old houses, there are plenty of projects large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers – individuals or groups – with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.

### LIBRARY:

Peace and Justice books for the Berrigan House Library.

### \$CASH MONEY\$:

Cash donations are essential to pay our property taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance of property, upkeep and gas for two vans, purchase of needed supplies, and for the continued publication and mailing of the *via pacis*, a good 20% of our annual expenses.

## DMCW WEBSITE

For up to date news & info on the community, the Rachel Corrie Project, Berrigan House and Occupy the World Food Prize visit the DMCW web page: [www.dmc-catholicworker.org](http://www.dmc-catholicworker.org).



The Hammer of Justice prepares for trial in Nebraska

pg. 1

Sleeping on Oil yet Freezing to Death

pg. 1

In her own words from Sarpy jail, "Why I Acted"

pg. 1

Reflections from a new Catholic Worker

pg. 3

"Legacy of Light" by Bob Cook

pg. 4

40 years and counting, DMCW's anniversary

pg. 5

Report from Jeju

pg. 6

Why Northrop Grumman? Reznicek's research that put the hammer in her hand and her in the defendant's chair

pg. 9